

CITY OF CARLSBAD

INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Richard D. Lopez, Mayor

Wendy Austin, City Administrator

TO: Gina Styring, C/O Curtis Waldo-Attorney

CC: Ken Ahrens-Deputy City Administrator, Denise Madrid-Boyea-City Attorney, Jessie Rodriguez-Chief of Police, and Sandi Countryman-Human Resource Director

FROM: Wendy Austin-City Administrator *WA*

DATE: March 17, 2025

SUBJECT: Predetermination Hearing – Gina Styring – March 13, 2025, 10:30AM

This memo serves to **Affirm** the recommendation of the Carlsbad Police Department to **Discharge** Gina Styring from employment with the City of Carlsbad, from her current position as a Telecommunicator (Dispatch) Supervisor with the Carlsbad Police Department.

In summary, Ms. Styring's conduct violated the following Carlsbad Police Department Policies:

- Carlsbad Police Department Policy No. 3-400 Internal Investigations
- Carlsbad Police Department Policy No. 3-106 Sexual Misconduct
- Carlsbad Police Department Policy No. 3-100 Professional Standards of Conduct

It has been alleged that Ms. Styring had an inappropriate sexual relationship with a Police Officer of the Carlsbad Police Department, including having a sexual encounter(s) at the Carlsbad Police Department on the 2nd Floor, in the restroom. Both Ms. Styring and the Police Officer denied, and continue to deny, these allegations. It was determined by the Carlsbad Police Department that due to the seriousness of the allegations, an administrative investigation would be conducted.

Both Ms. Styring and the Police Officer were placed on *Paid Administrative Leave* on February 21, 2025. As part of the administrative investigations, polygraphs were scheduled for both Ms. Styring and the Police Officer for February 25, 2025. Both Ms. Styring and the Police Officer refused to participate in the polygraphs, and the scheduled times slots for the polygraphs were canceled. The Police Officer was placed on *Unpaid Administrative Leave* on February 25, 2025, because he asked to reschedule the polygraph, prolonging the administrative investigation. While attempting to reschedule the polygraph, the Police Officer resigned on March 12, 2025, prior to the completion of his administrative investigation.

Through the administrative investigation, four (4) Carlsbad Police Department employees confirmed that the Police Officer involved with Ms. Styring, admitted to having a sexual relationship with Ms. Styring,

including sexual activity taking place at the Carlsbad Police Department. Both Ms. Styring and the Police Officer confirmed they have participated in sexual conversations together on Snapchat, including Ms. Styring sharing sexually explicit pictures of herself. In addition, after the initial administrative investigation interviews, both Ms. Styring and the Police Officer did confirm that they met on one occasion at a local gym, American Muscle, but they both deny sexual contact during this encounter. These after-the-fact admissions seem disingenuous and raise suspicion to their credibility. The Police Department Internal Affairs Division and the Chief of Police conclude that Ms. Styring and the Police Officer were not being honest during the administrative investigation and that the other four (4) employees of the Carlsbad Police Department are credible, and would have no reason to fabricate these allegations. Both Ms. Styring and the accused Police Officer refused to fully cooperate with the investigation by declining to participate in scheduled polygraphs. Both have accused other Carlsbad Police Department employees of spreading untrue rumors.

During the Predetermination Hearing, I specifically asked Ms. Styring if she would be willing to take the polygraph to "clear her name" and as a path forward to potentially holding others accountable to spreading untrue rumors. Ms. Styring once again declined to participate in a polygraph stating that she felt harassed.

Carlsbad Police Department Policy No. 3-400, Section VII. Investigation of Complaints, Subsection I (5 a & B), specifically states:

5. To submit to a polygraph or Computer Voice Stress Analysis (CVSA) examination, if the Chief of Police: (a) Considers the circumstances to be extraordinary; or (b) Believes the integrity of an employee is in question.

Both conditions (a) and (b) are relevant to Ms. Styring's alleged conduct. Ms. Styring is intentionally choosing to violate a Carlsbad Police Department Policy, which applies to all employees of the Carlsbad Police Department.

During the Predetermination Hearing, Ms. Styring was not credible. I find it difficult to believe that four (4) Carlsbad Police Department employees would fabricate these serious allegations. Mrs. Styring stated that there would be no reason for these four (4) employees to fabricate these allegations. In addition, Ms. Styring appeared with Legal Counsel, Curtis Waldo, and neither Ms. Styring nor Mr. Waldo presented evidence nor witnesses to substantiate her claims. Ms. Styring could easily clear her name by participating in a polygraph. Ms. Styring also had Union (CPOA) Representation during the Predetermination Hearing. Ms. Styring's Union Representative also strongly advised Ms. Styring to participate in a polygraph.

Ms. Styring's alleged conduct has created a situation in the Police Department, and specifically in the Dispatch Division, of decreased morale and productivity. This type of conduct, especially of a supervisor, creates an environment that is unethical and unprofessional for other employees, and creates the potential for a hostile work environment.

All City of Carlsbad employees are held to high standards, and these standards are particularly important for the Carlsbad Police Department. The professional standards of conduct that are expected of Carlsbad Police Department employees is paramount to maintaining a culture of integrity, respect, and accountability within the ranks of the Department and for maintaining Public Trust and Effective Policing.

Although this has no impact on my decision, but for the record only, on March 14, 2025, Mrs. Styring's Attorney, Curtis Waldo, requested a phone conversation with Mrs. Madrid-Boyea. During the conversation, Mr. Waldo offered that Mrs. Styring would resign from her position, but only if the City of Carlsbad was to pay her two years' salary. This amount would be approximately \$200,000. I found this offer to be unacceptable, and I declined to make a counter-offer.

Ms. Styring is *Discharged* from her position as a Telecommunicator Supervisor with the Carlsbad Police Department as of March 18, 2025. Mrs. Styring's last day to receive *Paid Administrative Leave* is March 18, 2025. Ms. Styring shall be paid for all accrued vacation hours as of March 18, 2025.